THE

Chriſtian Hiſtory;

Containing Accounts of the Propagation and Revival of Religion in *Great Britain*, *America*, &c.

Saturday FEBRUARY 9. 1744,5. § N°. 102.

Accounts of the Revival of Religion in Boſton, *continued.*

THE People ſeem'd to love to hear us more than ever: The *Weekly Tueſday Evening Lectures* at the Church in *Brattle-Street* were much crowded and not ſufficient: *April* 17. 1741, another *Lecture* was therefore opened every *Friday Evening* at the *South Church*; when a ſeaſonable Diſcourſe was given by the Rev. Dr. *Sewall* from *Joh.* xvi. 8: And ſoon after, another *Lecture* every *Tueſday* and *Friday Evening* was opened at the *New-North*: three of the moſt capacious Houſes of public Worſhip in Town; the leaſt of which I ſuppoſe will hold *three Thouſand* People. Beſides the *ancient Lecture* every *Thurſday Noon* at the Old *Church*; and other *Lectures* in other Churches.

Dr. *Sewall*'s Diſcourſe, with three other excellent Sermons on the *ſame Text* were ſoon after publiſhed. In the *firſt* of which he ſays, Page 20. 'As more lately, we 'have receiv'd *good News* of this Kind from more diſtant 'Places upon thisContinent; ſo I can't but hope thatGOD's 'ſending *one* and *another* of his Servants among us who had 'been perſonally acquainted with theſe later wonderful 'Works of Grace, together with their very laborious and 'fervent Preaching, and the Miniſtry of others his Servants; 'has been bleſs'd to convince many of their Sins, & awaken 'them to a ſerious Concern about their Souls. Yea, it is 'hopeful that there are a Number conve[illegible]d, and brought

'Home to Chriſt. Let us give the Praiſe to the GOD of 'all Grace.' In the *ſecond* he ſays, p. 66. 'To conclude, 'Let us with humble Thankfulneſs behold that *remarkable* '*Work of Grace* which I truſt GOD is carrying on in this '*Town* and other Places; and be encouraged to ſeek the 'Lord more earneſtly, that his Kingdom may come with 'Power by the more plentiful Effuſions of his holy Spirit; 'and that the Lord would rebuke Satan in all his Attempts 'to *hinder* or *reproach* this Work, and *bruiſe him under our* '*Feet*. Let us bleſs GOD for his Spirit and Grace mani-'feſted in and with *his Servants* that have preached the Goſ-'pel among us, and for the great Succeſs which has attended 'their painful Labours.' In the *fourth* he ſays, pag. laſt, 'And let ſuch as are under good Impreſſions from the Spi-'rit, take Heed to themſelves, and beware of Apoſtacy. O 'ponder thoſe awful Words! *If any Man draw back, my* '*Soul ſhall have no Pleaſure in him*, Heb. 10. 38. But if 'there ſhould come *a falling away* reſpecting *ſome* that have 'promiſed fair, let us not be ſhaken in Mind as if *the main* '*Work* was not of GOD; nor take up an *evil Report* againſt 'it. Scripture and Experience warn us to fear and prepare 'for ſuch a Trial.'

And in the *Preface* he ſays, 'It hath pleaſed the ſovereign 'and gracious God, *in whoſe Hand our Times are*, to ordain 'that we ſhould live under ſome peculiar Advantages for 'our precious Souls. For to the *ordinary Means*, we have 'ſuper-added the Manifeſtation of the Spirit, in *extraordi-*'*nary Works* of Grace. We have lately heard glad Tidings 'from one Place and another, that many are enquiring the 'Way to *Zion*, with their Faces thitherward; and ſome 'are declaring what God hath done for their Souls. Yea, 'God hath brought this Work Home to our own Doors, 'and we hear *many* crying out, *What muſt we do to be ſaved!* 'And there are *a Number* hopefully rejoicing in God's Sal-'vation. Of ſuch a Seaſon as this it may well be ſaid, *I* '*have heard thee in a Time accepted, and in the Day of Salva-*'*tion have I ſuccoured thee: Behold, Now is the accepted Time;* '*Behold, Now is the Day of Salvation.* I hope God's Peo-'ple are reaping the Fruit of their Prayers, particularly on 'extraordinary Days of Faſting obſerv'd with an eſpecial 'View to this great Bleſſing, the plentiful Effuſion of the

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'holy Spirit. O there's great Reaſon to fear that another 'like Seaſon will never, never return upon you. O Sleeper! 'Awake, and hearken, there's a Noiſe, and a Shaking 'among the dry Bones. Some it may be of your own Ac-'quaintance, ſecure like you a little while ago, are now in 'deep Concern, and can no longer reliſh thoſe carnal Plea-'ſures in which you were Companions. Now, Deſtruction 'from God is a Terror to them, and they are fleeing from 'the Wrath to come. What a Reproof doth God give to 'your Stupidity in the Awakenings of others? And here, 'among you with whom the Spirit is ſtriving at this Day, 'we behold *many* of our *young People*. O our Children! 'God is drawing nigh to you in a diſtinguiſhing Manner &c.'

Nor were the People ſatisfied with all theſe Lectures: But as *private Societies* for *religious Exerciſes*, both of *younger* and *elder* Perſons, both of *Males* and *Females* by themſelves, in ſeveral Parts of the Town, now increaſed to a much greater Number than ever, *viz.* to *near* the Number of *Thirty*, meeting on *Lord's-Day*, *Monday*, *Wedneſday* and *Thurſday Evenings*; ſo the People were conſtantly employing the Miniſters to pray and preach at thoſe Societies, as alſo at many *private Houſes* where no form'd Society met: And ſuch Numbers flocked to hear us as greatly crowded them, as well as more than uſually fill'd our Houſes of publick Worſhip both on *Lord's-Days* and *Lectures*, eſpecially Evening Lectures, for about a *Twelvemonth* after.

Some of our Miniſters, to oblige the People, have ſometimes preached in publick and private, at one Houſe or another, even *every Evening*, except after Saturday, for *a Week together*: And the more we pray'd and preach'd, the more enlarged were our Hearts, and the more delightful the Employment. And O how many, how ſerious and attentive were our Hearers! How many *awakened* and *hopefully converted* by their Miniſters! And how many of ſuch added ſoon to our Churches, as we hope will be ſaved eternally? Scarce a Sermon ſeem'd to be preached without ſome good Impreſſions.

As to *the Church* to which I belong --- Within *ſix Months* from the End of *Jan.* 1740,1. were *Threeſcore* join'd to our *Communicants*: the greater Part of whom gave a more exact Account of the *Work* of the SPIRIT of GOD on their Souls in *Effectual Calling*, as deſcribed in the *Weſtminſter Aſſembly's*

ſhorter Catechiſm, than I was wont to meet with before: Beſides *many others* I could not but have Charity for, who refrained from coming to the *Table* of CHRIST for want of a ſatisfying View of the Work of *Renovation* in them. Mr. *Tennent* being ſo exceeding ſtrict in cautioning People from running into *Churches*, taking the ſacred Covenant, and receiving the Lord's Supper the Seal thereof, 'till they had *ſaving Grace*; that diverſe brought to very hopeful Diſpoſitions, yea, ſome I doubt not, to embrace the SAVIOUR in all his Offices, were through Fear and Darkneſs kept from coming into full Communion. Or otherwiſe, many more I believe, would have enter'd; who had they the like Experiences *a Year before*, I doubt not would have readily offered themſelves, and we ſhould have as readily receiv'd them, and would now, as ſome of the moſt hopeful Chriſtians. So far did Mr. *Tennent*'s awakening Miniſtry ſhake their Hopes and hinder them, that thoſe whom I apprehended to be *thirſty*, and thought my ſelf obliged to encourage, I found the Impreſſions of his Preaching had diſcouraged.

Yea, ſome who had been in *full Communion* were made ſo ſuſpicious of themſelves, as to refrain partaking; and I had no ſmall Pains to remove their Scruples. For as to my own Opinion --- It ſeems to me, that *where there is a* Thirſt *for* CHRIST *and his* ſpiritual Benefits, *that* Thirſt *is raiſed by the* SPIRIT *of* CHRIST: *And in raiſing ſuch a* Thirſt, *he qualifies for them, ſhows his Readineſs to ſatiate it, invites, requires, and gives ſufficient Grounds for coming to him at theſe Pipes of living Waters; tho' we mayn't be ſure whether this* Thirſt *ariſes from a renewed Heart or no: And thither therefore ſhould we come with a humble Senſe of our Emptineſs and Unworthineſs, and with our thirſty Souls reaching forth to* HIM, *to receive from his open, offered and overflowing Fulneſs.* If I am miſtaken, I deſire to ſee it.

However, in many of theſe People, their *Convictions* in a Judgment of Charity, appeared by the ſame SPIRIT to be carried further than an awakening View of their Sins, their Sinfulneſs and Miſery; even to what the *Aſſembly's Catechiſm* agreeable to *Scripture*, calls an *enlightening their Minds in the Knowledge of* CHRIST, or clear, lively and attractive Views of his perfect Suitableneſs, All-ſufficiency and Willingneſs as the SON of GOD incarnate and *Mediator*, to receive them, and by his Merits, Interceſſion, Grace and Spirit to recon-

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cile them to the holy GOD, and ſave and make them compleatly and eternally holy and happy, tho' now the Chief of Sinners: And in ſuch Views as theſe he melted their frozen Hearts, *renewed their Wills*, overcome them with *Affection* to Him, and *perſwaded and enabled them to embrace Him* in his Perſon and all his Offices and Benefits *as offered in the Goſpel.*

By Dr. *Colman*'s Letter of *June* 8. 1741. it appears 'that in 1741, in *April*, there were *Nine* or *Ten*, and in 'May were *Nineteen* added to his Church: Among whom '(ſays the Doctor) were many of the rich and polite of our 'Sons and Daughters.' †

And the Rev. Mr. *Webb*, ſenior Paſtor of the *New North*, juſt now informs me, with Reſpect to his Church & People, in the following Words --- '*Admiſſions* to *full Communion* of 'thoſe hopefully wrought upon in the late Day of Grace 'about *one Hundred and ſixty*: Of which *one Hundred and* 'two from *January* 1740,1 to 1741,2. Of the above-men-'tioned, *by far the greater Part* have ſince given hopeful 'Signs of ſaving Converſion. And *many more* give good 'Evidences of Grace; but for the Reaſons in your Account '[above] cannot be prevailed upon to come to the *Table* of 'the LORD.

In this Year 1741, the very Face of the *Town* ſeem'd to be ſtrangely altered. Some who had not been here ſince the *Fall before*, have told me their great Surprize at the Change in the general Look and Carriage of People, as ſoon as they landed. Even the *Negroes* & *Boys* in the Streets ſurprizingly left their uſual Rudeneſs: I knew many of theſe had been greatly affected, and now were form'd into *religious Societies*. And one of our worthy Gentlemen expreſſing his Wonder at the remarkable Change, inform'd me, that whereas he uſed with others on *Saturday Evenings* to viſit the *Taverns*, in order to clear them of Town Inhabitants, they were wont to find many there, and meet with Trouble to get them away; but *now* having gone at thoſe Seaſons again, he found them empty of all but Lodgers.

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† Preface to his Sermon of *Souls flying to* CHRIST. Printed at *London* in 1742.

Of

Of that Time the Rev. Dr. *Colman* juſtly writes to the Rev. Dr. *Watts* on *Sept.* 15. 1741, in the following Terms, ‘ ‡ Thanks be to GOD, in our Province the Impreſſions of ‘ Religion grow and increaſe in a happy, wiſe, ſedate Man- ‘ ner, ſuch as gives a joyous Proſpect relating to the next ‘ Generation, that our *young Ones* will be wiſe, grave, de- ‘ vout Parents to their Children. I know not how to ad- ‘ mire the pleaſant, gracious *Work* of GOD: Our *Lectures* ‘ flouriſh, our *Sabbaths* are joyous, our *Churches* increaſe, ‘ our *Miniſters* have new Life and Spirit in their Work.’

Of the ſame Time the Rev. Mr. *Cooper* alſo writes on *Nov.* 20. 1741, in his *noble Preface* to Mr. *Edwards*'s *moſt excellent, ſolid, judicious and ſcriptural Performance*, as the venerable Mr. *Williſon* of *Scotland* rightly ſtiles them --- in the following Manner --- ‘ I verily believe, in this our *Metropo-* ‘ *lis*, there were the *laſt Winter* ſome *Thouſands* under ſuch ‘ religious Impreſſions as they never felt before. --- And as ‘ to the *Fruits* of this Work, (which we have been bid ſo ‘ often to wait for) bleſſed be GOD! ſo far as there has ‘ been Time for Obſervation they appear to be *abiding*. I ‘ don't mean, that none have loſt their Impreſſions, or that ‘ there are no Inſtances of Hypocriſy and Apoſtacy. *Scrip-* ‘ *ture* and *Experience* lead us to expect theſe at ſuch a Seaſon. ‘ It is to me Matter of Surprize and Thankfulneſs, that as ‘ yet there have been *no more*. But I mean, That a *great* ‘ *Number* of thoſe who have been *awakened* are ſtill ſeeking ‘ and ſtriving to enter in at the ſtrait Gate. *The moſt* of ‘ thoſe who have been *thought to be converted*, continue to ‘ give Evidences of their being new Creatures, and ſeem to ‘ cleave to the LORD with full Purpoſe of Heart. To be ‘ ſure *a new Face of Things continues* in *this Town*; tho' ma- ‘ ny Circumſtances concur to render ſuch a Work not ſo ‘ obſervable here, as in ſmaller and diſtant Places. Many ‘ Things not becoming the *Profeſſion of the Goſpel* are in a ‘ Meaſure reformed. *Taverns*, *Dancing-Schools*, and ſuch ‘ Meetings as have been call'd *Aſſemblies*, which have always ‘ prov'd unfriendly to ſerious Godlineſs, are much leſs fre- ‘ quented. Many have reduc'd their *Dreſs* and *Apparel*, ſo

‡ His *Letter* at the End of Mr. *Edwards*'s aforeſaid *Sermon*, printed at *London* in 1742.

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'as to make them look more like the Followers of the humble JESUS. And it has been both ſurprizing and pleaſant 'to ſee how ſome younger People, and of that Sex too which 'is moſt fond of ſuch Vanities, have put off the *Bravery of 'their Ornaments*, as the Effect and Indication of their ſeeking the inward Glories of *the King's Daughter*. Religion 'is now much more the Subject of Converſation at Friends 'Houſes, than ever I knew it. The *Doctrines of Grace* are 'eſpous'd and reliſh'd. *Private religious Meetings* are greatly 'multiplied. --- The *publick Aſſemblies* (eſpecially *Lectures*) 'are much better attended: And our *Auditories* were never 'ſo attentive and ſerious. There is indeed an extraordinary 'Appetite after *the ſincere Milk of the Word*. It is more than 'a Twelvemonth ſince an *Evening-Lecture* was ſet up in 'this Town; there are now ſeveral; two conſtantly on '*Tueſday* and *Friday-Evenings*; when ſome of our *moſt capacious Houſes* are well fill'd, with Hearers who by their 'Looks and Deportment ſeem to come to hear that their 'Souls might live. An Evening in GOD's Courts is now 'eſteem'd better than many elſewhere. There is alſo great 'Reſort to *Miniſters* in *private*. Our Hands continue *full 'of Work*: And many Times we have more than we can 'diſcourſe with diſtinctly and ſeperately---.'

Jan. 11. 1741,2. moſt of the *aſſociate Paſtors* of *this Town* agreed on a Courſe of *Days of Prayer* in their *ſeveral Churches*; as the Rev. Dr. *Sewall* well expreſſes it, in his *Sermon* on that Occaſion preach'd in the *South Church*, *Feb.* 26.1741,2. 'to bleſs the Name of GOD for ſpiritual Bleſſings already 'received in the *remarkable Revival* of *his Work* among *us* 'and in *many other Places*; to ſeek of GOD the more plentiful 'Effuſion of his HOLY SPIRIT; that the LORD would preſerve us and his People from every Thing that hath a Tendency to quench his SPIRIT and obſtruct the Progreſs and 'Succeſs of *his good Work*; and that it may go on and proſper, 'till the whole Land ſhall be filled with the bleſſed 'Fruits of the SPIRIT.' And in his Sermon he ſays, 'We 'ought to praiſe the LORD that he has not left us without a 'Witneſs of his divine Power and Grace in the *wonderful 'Operations* of HIS SPIRIT in *our Times*. --- Let the *Succeſs* 'which GOD hath of late given to the Miniſters of the Word '*above what we have known in Times paſt*, and animate us to 'labour more abundantly. --- And let not any pervert what

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« has been ſaid, to prejudice themſelves or others againſt *that* « *wonderful Work of Grace*, which I verily believe, GOD has « wrought in *this Town* and *other Places*.'

In ſome, this further Work of *Conviction* and *effectual Calling* was clearer, in others more obſcure, in others leſs or more doubtful. And ſo various likewiſe were the *Joys* and *Conſolations* riſing from the various Changes or Exerciſes in them, or their various Applications to CHRIST for Mercy. But herein *their Paſtors* laboured to preſerve them from Miſtakes, to diſcover their Dangers on every Side, to lead them to a *thorough Conviction* and *Humiliation*, and thro' theſe to right Views of CHRIST and cloſing with him in a ſaving Manner; that they might not be deceiv'd with Joys or Conſolations which belonged not to them.

Of thoſe *who came not into full Communion* with our Churches --- ſome who were under ſtrong *Convictions* and in a hopeful Way, have ſince ſadly loſt them; the SPIRIT of GOD has ceaſed ſtriving, and they are more blind and hard than ever: And, ſome of theſe like thoſe under his ineffectual Influence in the Apoſtles Days; *After they have eſcaped the Pollution of the World through the Knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, are again entangled therein and overcome; their latter End is worſe with them than the Beginning*; and *it has happened to them according to the true Proverb,* « *the Dog* « *is turned to his own Vomit again, and the Sow that was waſhed* « *to her wallowing in the Mire.*' 2 Pet. ii. 20,--22. And ſome who had *fair Reſemblances* both of ſaving *Grace* and holy *Joy*, whereby they for a Time deceived both themſelves and others; after high Appearances have fallen away: as ſome who firſt followed CHRIST himſelf, yet after left him; and as he has repreſented the various Events of Impreſſions made by his own and his Succeſſors Preaching, in the *Parable* of the *Sower*, *Mat.* xiii. *Mark* iv. and *Luke* viii.

(*To be finiſh'd in our next.*)

Sold by *D. Henchman* in *Cornhil*, the following Treatiſes.

Hooker's poor doubting Chriſtian drawn to CHRIST.
Shepard's ſincere Convert and ſound Believer.
Willard's Sacramental Meditations.
Stoddard's Safety of appearing in the Righteouſneſs of CHRIST, and Guide to CHRIST.
Life and Death of Mrs. *Bury*: with her Elegy by Dr. *Watts*.
CHRIST the King & Witneſs of *Truth*. By Mr. *Sol. Williams*.